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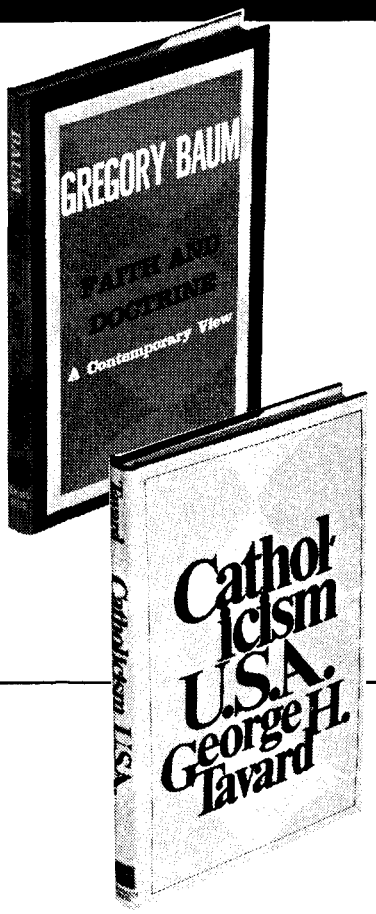

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NEWS AND VIEWS

All goes not well for the State of California in the preparation of its $500 million suit against Union Oil and accomplices (Gulf, Mobil and Texaco) in the Santa Barbara muck-up. It can't find university professors willing to testify in the case.

Chief Deputy Attorney General Charles A. O'Brien put it crassly: the experts do not want to jeopardize their consulting fees from oil companies.

Wilbur H. Somerton, professor of petroleum engineering at Berkeley, worded the reason a bit more delicately, but it amounted to the same thing: "My interest is serving the petroleum industry. I view my obligation to the community as to supply it with well-trained petroleum engineers."

Dr. Lyman L. Handy, chairman of the department of petroleum engineering at USC, denies "we have sold out." In California they're taking that with a slick of oil.

•

The Army continues its little game of libel against GI deserters, with a kook-and-misfit profile of the allegedly typical deserter to Sweden.

According to the Army, he's "had three years of high school education . . . no civilian occupation or skill . . . could not adjust to Army life, and was a disciplinary problem before he defected."

The profile clashes with just about every honest evaluation made by visitors to the ex-GIs' colony in Sweden.

Harvey Cox went and wrote admiringly of the deserters' "seriousness" and "dedication." Richard John Neuhaus cited their "sense of responsibility." John Cogley praised their intelligence, likening them to a group "collected by raiding the campuses of a couple-dozen high schools and picking out only the most gifted students." David M. Gracie sums up: "The Vietnam war deserter is the guy next door."

Sympathetic critiques of these disaffected Americans are rounded up in a booklet, *Deserters in Exile*, published by Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam. The booklet includes, not surprisingly, a number of conflicting judgments, but on one detail there is unanimity, the reason for deserting: Vietnam.

As Cogley put it, "All are persuaded that the United States has been engaged in monstrous immorality in Vietnam."

The Army's explanation is the stuff of the brothers Grimm. It says that most GIs split to Sweden because of disciplinary problems. And there are those who take this hook, line and sinker, like Fred S. Hoffman, the AP's military writer. His lead on the Army release:

"WASHINGTON (AP)—Opposition to the Vietnam war motivated only a relatively small number of the American soldiers who have deserted to Sweden in recent years . . ."

All over the U.S. newspapers dutifully picked up the story and perpetuated the fantasy.

•

Where else but from Harvard, the following strike poster?:

Conjugation for Subjugation

I restructure	We restructure
You restructure	You restructure
He restructures	They control

Conjugation for Liberation

I strike	We strike
You strike	You strike
He strikes	They lose

•

Hell hath no fury like a conservative scorned. So when the *National Catholic Reporter* gave columnist Jeffrey Hart his month's notice, Hart packed four weeks' venom into one and zeroed in.

"The entire production is contemptible," Hart fumed, tilting at "the lazy negations of John Cogley," the "sleazy contemporaneousness of Daniel Callahan," and the "unmistakably low" style of the paper. It's a "wretched hate sheet," exclaimed Hart, a former Nixon speech writer. "In the interest of truth in packaging, perhaps the journal ought to be called . . . the *National Anti-Catholic Reporter*."

It was a performance worthy of the K.C. chancery.

Editor Boy Hoyt, who's learned to look for silver linings, commented, "You should have seen the covering letter."

Hoyt isn't giving up on one day finding a conservative columnist who will make liberals and radicals stop and give thought. But even before Hart began to assault *NCR* editorials, he had come to the conclusion that that man wasn't Jeffrey Hart. "His approach elicited exclusively polemical responses," said Hoyt.

•

The riot at the Youth for Decency Rally in Baltimore should have surprised no one. Trouble was being courted from the start.

There were on the steering committee those who viewed decency as transcending the Jackie Gleason Show and My Three Sons. They wanted to know about the decency of economic neglect and the decency of the slaughter in Vietnam.

Fat chance they had of getting anywhere. Decency is a one-dimensional item in Baltimore, so the rally proceeded as a jejune, exploitable, right-wingish jamboree after the fashion of the mock-decency rally in Miami.

Liberation News Service predicted a week before the event that decency could get out of hand in Baltimore. It did: 138 injuries, 142 arrests.

Immediately, city fathers were crying "peaceniks" and "this is what comes from permissiveness." And everyone knew that decency never had a chance in Baltimore.

•

God Bless America Department:

—Al Capp before the Daughters of the American Revolution: "It's very simple—anyone who kills Americans is no damn good."

—Capt. Dean Eldreth, of the foe in the Mekong Delta: "The GIs like killing them, that's for sure." JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Birth of UCM

New York

To the Editors: It's a small point, but for the sake of history it should be pointed out that the University Christian Movement, eulogized in Joseph Walsh's "Self-Inflicted Death" [April 11], was born September 6, 1966. It is thus 30-months old, and some there are who have punned about that figure.

LEON HOWELL

Lux *Overstated*

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: Fr. Carlo Weber, S.J., threw a penetrating shaft of light on an acute problem for many of us religious today in his excellent article, "The Time of the Fugitive" [April 18]. But I think he overstates his case. He creates the impression that structural concern and personalism are incompatible counter-values in the Church today: "I think we can surrender the illusion that there will be some compromise between the two choices." Compromise, no; but what about opting for a dynamic balance or harmonious tension between the two? Like the family or any other social unit the Church cannot exist without structures which, while designed to promote individual freedom, will of their very nature also at times prove constrictive and smack of compromise.

A religious vocation, among other things, is a special call to nurture the health of the Church's structures, and to utilize them, for the greater good of persons. This remains true in spite of the fact that so many of us today are awakening to the neglected demands of our own personhood. We find ourselves immobilized at the "structural" end of a seesaw, realizing that the vacancy at the "personalism" end explains why we aren't going anywhere. But the remedy won't be found in hacking the teeterboard in two; we have to climb painfully toward equilibrium. Maybe this seems

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A MATTER OF PRIORITIES

Arguing priorities with a president is an easy game. There is so much to be done, and, by the same token, so much that any administration, Democrat or Republican, can do. The disconcerting thing about the Nixon administration is that its priorities of the first 100 days are shaping up to be precisely what cynics said they would be: militarist, chauvinist and elitist. Hence, the emphasis on new defense systems, like the ABM; hence, the extension of arguable policies of stars-and-stripes patriotism; hence, the short-changing in the proposed budget of crucial domestic programs: education, housing, social security, public health, etc. Educators, health officials, mayors of the great urban communities of the nation might, indeed, protest the priorities of an administration which keeps public programs in financial handicap, while at the same time it projects a $5.8 billion surplus for the federal budget—a very conservative profit figure, incidentally, whether or not Representative Wilbur Mills succeeds in trimming a stingy budget (defense appropriations excepted, of course) still further.

Now President Nixon has spoken out on Latin America, and another priority appears to have gone awry: the Alliance for Progress. "There sometimes is a tendency to become wedded to a program because it has a popular connotation," Mr. Nixon said of the Alliance in a Pan American Day speech before the Organization of American States. "Fine slogan" and "beautiful rhetoric" surround the Alliance, Mr. Nixon noted, but what of results in economic growth: "less than the rate of growth in non-Communist Asia, and . . . even less than the rate of growth in Communist Eastern Europe." Which may be true enough, but is still not sufficient cause to gun indiscriminately at the Alliance, particularly when there is nothing better or, in this case, nothing at all to take its place. What is needed, in the words of Sol M. Lino-

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witz, retiring U.S. delegate to the OAS, is a "commitment for action"; what Mr. Nixon is offering is a visit by Governor Nelson Rockefeller and a warmed-over cliché. His own program, he said, is to be "derived from open eyes, open ears, open minds and open hearts." Which sums to nothing when thoughts are blank.

If the revelation of the Nixon position on the Alliance for Progress was distressing, the timing was absolutely appalling. It came as the board of governors of the Inter-American Development Bank met in Guatemala, and as members of the Latin American Economic Commission of the United Nations (CEPAL) convened in Peru for their thirteenth conference; thus the Nixon talk served to quicken suspicions and hostilities toward the U.S. and to cast further gloom over already gloomy agendas. Nowhere in Latin America do they need Mr. Nixon's reminding that if relative growth rates remain the same, per capita income in the U.S. will be 15 times greater than in Latin America by the end of the century; they know it all too well. Likewise, they agree with Mr. Nixon that "this is something we cannot allow to happen." The problem is how can they expect anything but the worst when the President of the United States takes to sniping at the program which, despite all its faults, is the major hope for balancing inter-hemisphere economies.

An annoying matter is that statistically Mr. Nixon can make a case for the notion that the Alliance for Progress has not "done much good." It is a fact that the Latin American growth rate was higher during the pre-Alliance 1950s than it has been during the 1960s—5.1 percent against 4.8 percent. But it is a fact, too, that the American role in Latin America is no less exploitive, and has actually broadened and sophisticated. Profit and interest outflow to foreign investors or lenders, 25 percent for the years 1955-59, last year reached 36 percent of Latin America's export income. At the same time, U.S. holdings in Latin America climbed above $10 billion and earned U.S. interests a return of 11.8 percent (compared to a return of 6.7 percent on U.S. investments in Europe). Small wonder that Felipe Herrera, president of the Inter-American Development Bank, should score industrialized countries (read U.S.) for the hard terms of their aid programs.

The point is that it is hypocritical to examine growth rate figures, as Mr. Nixon did in his OAS speech, and condemn the program that is supposed to improve them, without also scoring the economic imperialism which not only vitiated the program but which has tended to make of it a tool in the exploitation process.

The immediate hope for the restoration of the Latin American priority in Washington rests now with Governor Rockefeller. Perhaps his fact-finding tour will produce the prescription for a very sick situation. But if aid and welfare cuts in the State of New York are indicative of wider attitudes, the enlightenment that filters back to Mr. Nixon, however congenial, will still be low-watt.

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TROUBLE IN THE YARD

BUCKLE DOWN, JOHN HARVARD

At first the scenario looked trite, composed at Berkeley and rehearsed at Columbia. But before the week was out it was clear that at Harvard the plot line had taken a different twist. The maddening *déjà vu* of an SDS faction fight, a building seizure, a bloody police bust, a campus-wide reaction of shock and indignation—all these elements were in the old script. But then the uniqueness of the local situation asserted itself. The strike was called not by radicals but by self-styled "moderate" students who called themselves the "Mem Church Group" (after their first meeting place in Harvard Memorial Church). Many faculty members immediately sympathized with the strike and, blessed by the first appearance of balmy weather, the entire university transformed itself into a mammoth teach-in. The strike did not stop education. Far from it. Never in my eight years at Harvard, four as a grad student and four as a professor, have I seen so much teaching and learning going on.

Everybody learned a lot. Radical students learned, and will not soon forget, that "confrontation tactics" can succeed beyond their wildest expectations. Moderate students learned that, when threatened, the Harvard administration can move with remorseless efficiency in bringing in the police if it chooses to. Thousands of ordinarily non-political students learned the names of the lawyers and bankers who constitute the Harvard Corporation. The world learned that Harvard is human too.

But the people who learned the most were the faculty. They learned that they have been, in fact, virtually disenfranchised. On an issue as crucial as that of whether to call in the police to remove students from a building, not only did no one consult them, they were not even informed. When a faculty member asked an administrator why no consultation with the faculty had occurred before such a drastic move was taken, he answered that it was a problem of "security." As a result, the Bay of Pigs debacle was reenacted in the Yard. Instead of a couple of hundred students holed up in a buliding, the administration found itself faced with ten thousand students deciding to go on strike.

How did it happen at America's oldest university? Again, embarrassingly, the issues were not particularly

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original ones. For months Harvard students have been trying to persuade the faculty and administration to sever connections with ROTC. At a meeting in February the Faculty of Arts and Sciences had already recommended that ROTC be stripped of academic standing and its instructors shorn of professorial status. But so far nothing had happened. In fact, a letter lifted from a dean's file during the University Hall sit-in suggested to some that certain administrators were trying to circumvent the faculty's decision. Also, in recent years Harvard has been expanding into Cambridge and Boston with little regard for the poor people it displaces. Ten years ago Harvard was not a landlord in Cambridge. Today it is the biggest one. SDS students, by canvassing university-owned housing, have raked up some very embarrassing material on Harvard's insensitivity to its urban neighbors. The demands of SDS include an end to Harvard's expansion and the abolition of ROTC. Other groups would settle for humane relocation, some university construction of low-income housing, and allowing ROTC to become a club. Still others demand a change in Harvard's archaic governing boards and the resignation of President Pusey. But SDS does not. It sticks to its own "eight demands," including black student participation in the forging of the new Afro studies program, the result of an agreement with the Association of African and Afro-American Students ("Afro") which brought black students into the strike a few days after its beginning.

On Monday, April 14, four days after the 5:00 am bust of April 10th, the stadium group had voted to continue the three-day-old strike until Friday. On Friday noon, minutes before the stadium group was to reassemble, the Harvard Corporation issued a historic, but cannily worded statement which promised to follow the faculty's wishes on ROTC, to build some low-income housing in Cambridge, to give some attention to the concerns of black students, and to look into possible changes in the governance of the university. The stadium gathering voted to suspend the strike for a week. SDS and "Afro" decided to stay out, the former until all its eight demands are met, the latter until the faculty takes positive action on its program. At this writing we are in the middle of the strike suspension. SDS supporters have staged a "mill-in" in University Hall, and Afro has remained patient. Other disruptive tactics are rumored and will have been unveiled by the time these words are read. No one knows how or when the whole thing will end.

Maybe it never will. We have learned this week how vulnerable any campus is to even a small group intent on making itself heard. But we have learned something far more basic and painful—that even Harvard cannot ignore the currents which have transformed universities from "ivory towers" (never a very accurate image) into vortices of social upheaval. While we as faculty have looked the other way, our universities have become subcontractors to the federal government and especially to the Pentagon on such a massive scale that any disaffiliation from the military would create real financial strains. While we filled out our foundation proposals, somebody in an obscure university office somewhere was buying up vast tracts of Cambridge real estate and mailing eviction notices. While we were off consulting, the power of deans, administrators and development directors has multiplied. While we were bucking for tenure, our campuses were flooded by idealistic young people no longer content merely to mouth the ideals we teach them but insisting that something be done about them. Professors, once the senior partners in the grove of academia, have now been cast in the role of security risks.

Of course the Harvard strike has displayed a certain sophistication and decorousness not seen on other campuses. During the sit-in students were careful not to damage furniture. They scrupulously put their cigarette butts in ash trays. There has been little of the strident obscenity that salted the Columbia siege. A few days back *The Crimson* carried a special supplement on the handsome poster graphics produced for the strike. Most importantly no charismatic leader has emerged and no personality cult has developed. There is no Harvard equivalent of Mark Rudd or Mario Savio. The fifteen-member strike committee very carefully distributes responsibility, shares the spotlight, avoids projecting the names of its leaders. But underneath the decorum there is a note of urgency and seriousness which cannot be missed. Only the most sanguine person can believe that Harvard will ever go back to being just what it was before April 10th, 1969.

What happens now depends very largely on the faculties. At first massively indignant about President Pusey's unilateral decision to call the police, faculty members have since begun to drift back into defensiveness and procedural bickering. A meeting of a largely faculty group called by the president on Monday (April 21st) to deal with the proposed "mill-in" in University Hall was still debating in that very hall when the strikers appeared. The discussion ended when striking students streamed through the room chanting "Smash ROTC, end expansion!" Although some faculty remained to converse with the students, many left in confusion and disbelief. I was one of those who remained. The striking students I talked to seemed surprised and even bewildered to find faculty persons who were actually ready to listen to them. One young man wearing the official red armband and a big "Abolish ROTC" badge provided me with my high, or low point, for the strike crisis when he asked me, "Why does the faculty always wait for the students to take the initiative on these moral issues? Why do they always *re*act instead of acting first? Why are they such moral cowards?"

I know my colleagues are not moral cowards. As individuals they have shown enormous courage in painful situations. But, as a group, I had to admit that the ac-

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cusation had some merit. It was not faculties but students who took the initiative in questioning weapons research, military training, racist investment policies and the destruction of poor neighborhoods. Faculties have taken stands on these issues only when they have been pushed, almost literally "up against the wall," by students. Many months ago in the pages of *Commonweal* I argued that universities can no longer remain content with being merely the "republic of intellect," regardless of how important that function is. They must now reappropriate their traditional role as the "republic of virtue" also. A university which has become the servant of mere national interest abdicates its right to the name. The university must be universal in its ultimate loyalty. Harvard University was there for 140 years before there was a United States. Its vocation and its mandate do not allow it to become the servant of national policy alone.

In a way, University Hall had already been "seized" years before the students entered it on April 9th. As a symbol of the university, it had been slowly infiltrated, bought, cajoled, flattered, and finally controlled by groups in our society whose interests run directly counter to the disinterested pursuit of truth. While faculties have been granted astonishingly wide latitude to pursue their own research and teaching, the vast financial resources of university, its colossal corporate power and even many of its intellectual resources have been handed over to the military and their allies. The University Hall sit-in and the subsequent bust finally brought these unpleasant facts to our attention in such a way that they can no longer be avoided.

Or can they? If faculties now focus on the mini-issue of how to punish the demonstrators; if they merely soften and moderate students' demands for basic changes in the university's conduct; if they hide behind procedural issues, then the tragic dénouement is upon us. By so withdrawing, faculties will abandon the students who really want creative change. This will leave the battle to be fought between paranoid anarchists and panicky administrators. When that war is over, only the wreckage of a university will remain. Not even the tenured fiefdoms of faculties will survive the maelstrom.

But if faculties awaken to the imperative now laid upon them, if they take the risks that will be required to assert the universities' basic moral, intellectual and international vocation, then something truly magnificent could emerge from the turmoil. Students and faculties together may fashion a university that not only studies the poor but enlists its resources in their struggle; a university that not only treasures the past but seeks to make sure there will be a future; a university that not only prepares the young for society but also inspires them to change it.

Right now the crimson is hardly ". . . in triumph flashing." It is battered and drooping. Before all this is over it could be furled forever, or flying higher than it ever has. And which happens depends not on SDS or Afro, not on the Overseers, the Corporation or Nathan Marsh Pusey. It depends mostly on the guys in the middle: the faculty. God help us. We'll need it. HARVEY COX

(Harvey Cox, whose most recent book is On Not Leaving It to the Snake, *is a regular columnist in these pages.)*

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ONE LITTLE, TWO LITTLE, THREE LITTLE JESUITS

ROMAN WINDMILL TILTING

The postmarital priesthood issue at the Amsterdam Student Parish has escalated all the way to Vatican City. Insiders say that it made the Pope weep off-schedule.

A compromise had been arrived at with Bishop Zwartkruis which allowed Father Jos Vryburg, one of the four Jesuits who were the heart of the Parish, to preach outside of eucharistic services. As will be recalled, Vryburg was supported by 97 percent of the parish as well as by his three teammates in his effort to retain his priestly functions after marriage. Vryburg left the Society of Jesus voluntarily last fall. Now, Father Huib Oosterhuis and Ton van Stap have been expelled from the order. Fr. van Kilsdonk cannot, for juridical reasons, be dismissed so readily.

Jan Hermans who heads the Dutch province of the Society has resigned, confessing that his decision predates the expulsions. Marius Schoenenberger, assistant to Jesuit bossman Pedro Arrupe for the Germanic countries, is also quitting. This disfavor has been rumored for some time. ("He doesn't judge our conformism, but the depth and sincerity of our commitment," said one of the student pastors.) The Amsterdam Student Parish is now a shambles. Services have been suspended "because of the Easter vacation." Three thousand of Amsterdam's most concerned Catholics may have become homeless. Most of these are young, and consequently the future of the Dutch Church may be in much more jeopardy than it now appears. For the Parish, as a recent survey shows, constituted their "last meaningful link" to the official church. The St. Ignatius habitués were not primarily "intellectuals," as had been presumed. Thirty-seven percent were students. Another 13 percent had college degrees, 50 percent were non-academics. This shows that we were not dealing with an "elite" church, but with a representative average of committed Amsterdam Catholics, preponderantly younger people. It was, then, a very

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flourishing community in a city where this year 40 percent of the existing churches will be closed for want of faithful. Under the new plan the parish structure of the inner city will be abandoned and the remaining churches will be diversified for the sake of diverse liturgies. Amsterdam will be first again in offering *à la carte* Catholicism.

The Student Parish had prepared this pluriformity for the last ten years. It acted as the conscience of the Dutch Church at the very time Catholics became aware of their personal consciences. Conscience was no longer something prefabricated in Rome and distributed by the parish priest. Now it looks as if the Parish has been strangled on Vatican orders. Of the five Jesuits only van Kilsdonk is left; the services have been stopped notwithstanding the *modus vivendi* reached with the local bishop. The dénouement took place in the Borgo San Spirito in Rome, and a somewhat misleading version of the affair has been aired in the press. Having been part of the Parish's inner life for the last six months I should like to de-mythologize it. The N.Y. *Times* (April 10) saw the conflict as caused by the celibacy issue and the attack on clerical celibacy by Fr. Oosterhuis. Celibacy has been attacked, however, far more insistently by dozens of Dutch priests. Apropos the Student Parish mess, this problem is no more than the tip of the iceberg, underneath which two conflicting concepts of the nature of the Church are clashing *mano a mano.*

(a) P. Arrupe's Feb. 9 letter to the Dutch Province of the Society of Jesus says that "on January 26 a sermon was preached during the eucharistic service, which shocked the faithful and many members of the Society. With good reason many see in this statement the abandonment of the fundamental principles of the Society . . . founded on the principle of voluntary chosen obedience to the lawful authority in the Church . . . [The student-pastors have] . . . inflicted damage which demands clear and public restitution. . . . I hope that they will offer this of their own volition . . . and that I shall not be compelled to take grave steps. . . ." The word celibacy was not mentioned. What was tacitly referred to was undoubtedly what this correspondent quoted of this sermon [See "A Post-Marital Priesthood," March 14], where the conflict of the two contrasting images of the Church becomes crystal clear.

(b) The pastors were unclear what exactly they were called upon to deny, to repeal, to repair. Also they assumed that after the arrangement with Bishop Zwartkruis, peace had returned and that the matter would be considered closed.

(c) Still, in March, Fr. Oosterhuis decided to take the matter up with Arrupe, although he was assured by Fr. V. O'Keefe that he would not be received until "restitution had been made." Oosterhuis arrived in Rome, made it clear that *Der Spiegel* knew why he was there, and spoke to Arrupe. The General was personally not unfriendly, even hinted at the pressure he was under, and finished by asking Oosterhuis to tend his resignation. When Oosterhuis (the poet-laureate of Catholic Holland) refused, there remained nothing else to do for Arrupe than to expel him from the order, as well as his colleague van Stap.

(d) The resignations of Jan Hermans, the Dutch provincial, who was bypassed in most of the conflict, and that of Marius Schoenenberger were accompanied by extraordinary obfuscations, denials and delays. When Monsignor Fausto Vallainc, Chief Vatican Press Officer, as late as April 10 announced their departures at a press conference, his action was denounced by the Dutch Jesuits as impolitic: "incredible that a Vatican press officer should act as spokesman for an order or the province of an order."

(e) When the word "Vatican" is used here, it might be useful to refer to an inhabitant of the Vatican City, according to whom the word Vatican often denotes an omnipresent, but extremely small group in the State Secretariat clustered around Cardinal Cicognani and Monsignor Benelli, reinforced by Monsignor Philippe at the Holy Office (those responsible for the Illich debacle).

(f) The unsinkable Fr. van Kilsdonk said at the just concluded session of the Dutch Pastoral Council that he found the discussions there "sterile and somewhat hypocritical, unable to come to grips with the real crisis situation which exists among students and young workers." The vicar-general of the diocese of Breda, Dr. R. Ruygers joined others in questioning the quality of the Dutch bishops' devotion to the collegiality-principle :"The bishops must find courage not only to express collegiality towards Rome, but also a collegiality away from Rome, where Rome takes patently unjust decisions, as it did in the Illich affair, for example. Here collegiality should turn against Rome." . . . After this demonstration of impotence, Van Kilsdonk's prognosis for the Dutch province of his order is black. "Who would still join this house divided against itself?" pondered the last little Indian of Amsterdam.

As a footnote: in the latest survey among practicing Catholics (Dutch Catholicism takes its own temperature uninterruptedly) 72 percent would accept married priests renewal without a pause. More interesting is that although only 54 percent consider themselves "progressive," about 90 percent answer all the questions in a progressive way!

Schillebeeckx' comment: "Progressives as well as conservatives find that for diplomatic reasons the bishops like to stay a bit vague where contact with Rome is concerned. Both factions are one in wishing a little more clarity in this matter."

Or, as one Dutch priest put it sadly: "We are beginning to think of Paul VI as the Holy Stepfather."

(Frederick Franck, author of Exploding Church, *writes frequently on the Dutch Church in our pages.)*

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MAILER AND HIS GODS

Norman Mailer goes to war

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

Norman Mailer arrived in Chicago for the Democratic Convention smelling blood. In the "last great American city," where "life was in the flesh and the massacre of flesh," he rightly feared that the plague he had written about for years was coming in. The antithetical forces of our society were marshaling for violent confrontation; and something ugly in the American heart was about to be revealed. Mailer sensed too, that, if the revolution was about to begin, he—because he had helped expose the cancer in our system—would share in the responsibility.

He was there as "the reporter" to write *Miami and the Siege of Chicago* for *Harper's*. But he was there also as the new Hemingway, exposing sham, testing his manhood. Masculinity, he had written, was not given but gained by winning small battles with honor in a cosmic war. His art could be no better than his character, and his character had to be forged living on the edge of violence, balancing and curbing the socially destructive and self-destructive urges within himself.

The great experience in any generation is its war. War puts the microscope to the generation, exposes its nerve, its roots, its holiest and unholiest ambitions. Beginning with *The Naked and the Dead* (Rinehart, 1948) and carrying through to Vietnam, Mailer has interpreted his generation's wars and warriors as manifestations of deeper tensions in civilian life. Since, for Mailer, man is most himself in crisis—skirting death, teetering on the brink of a ledge, dodging federal marshals in a dash for the Pentagon—conflict is the condition in which his nature can best be explored. In his Manichean vision of the universe, Mailer's paradoxically gentle, religious hero's freely plunging into violence is most likely to bring him into contact with God.

In *Advertisements for Myself* (Putnam's, 1959) Mailer described the "burning point of Hip" as the notion that God was in danger of dying. Man's fate is tied up with God's. God is not all-powerful, but a warring element in a divided universe, and we are part of his destiny. This, he is convinced, is the only explanation of the problem of evil—"that God himself is engaged in a destiny so extraordinary, so demanding, that he too can suffer from moral corruption, that he can make demands on us that are unfair, that he can abuse our beings in order to achieve his means, even as we abuse the very cells of our body." Mailer sees himself as one of God's explorers, his "seed-carrier," the embodiment of God's enormous embattled vision. Like Walt Whitman, he is part of God; he sums up the experience of distant men and past generations in himself. For him, as for Whitman in "Years of the Modern," "The earth, restive, confronts a new era, perhaps a general divine war,/No one knows what will happen next, such portents fill the days and nights . . ."

Mailer becomes America. For him, as for the Transcendentalists, the structure of the universe duplicates the structure of the individual self, all knowledge begins with self-knowledge. He has so steeped himself in contemporary culture, drawing together so much of our literary history, political conflicts, pop art, and religious heritage, that in his work we experience both a writer and a nation becoming, struggling, splitting, groping for a new form.

His method, of course, is artistically dangerous. As Richard Gilman has pointed out, Mailer has blurred the distinction between life and art, thought and action. He has disregarded the traditional meanings of philosophical

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and theological terms and has defined his own brand of existentialism entirely in terms of doing. He has abandoned the artist's traditional role of transcending politics at least to some degree, staking his whole career on the conviction that he is his art, and that he is legitimately his own most appropriate subject matter. For him, existentialism is the "feel of the human condition." For each book he reshuffles the cards of his sometimes unorthodox political, sexual and quasi-suicidal experiences—four marriages, arrests, a stabbing, socialism, bouts with alcohol, marijuana and mescaline—translating his ego into a literary portrayal of American life. Interpreting himself as the contemporary version of the Renaissance man, growing as he charges from activity to activity, he conjures up a vision of God remarkably like himself—an imperfect being at war with other gods, fighting the Devil (God's waste) and worthy of love because he is growing and because he is weak.

Mailer most successfully synthesized his life, literature and theology in *The Armies of the Night* (New American Library, 1959). Here he found his voice in a new impressionistic, almost Joycean journalism, giving contemporary history the existential historian's subjective sympathy without sacrificing the novelist-journalist's detachment. Here he gave his most mature and perceptive presentation of the central political theme he introduced in *The Naked and the Dead*: a diabolic totalitarian strain co-exists and interacts with the dominant American Christian democratic culture.

Mailer's achievement in *The Armies of the Night* is the perfection of a method with which he has been experimenting since his first books. Even as a novelist he has always been a journalist and a social critic, more interested in the social forces his characters represent than in the characters themselves, more anxious to convince the reader than to lead him through the imaginative experience of literature. Few of his fictional characters—soldiers, actors or congressmen—are memorable as persons. We remember rather the author, who seems to have parceled out his personality traits and beliefs—his Marxism, his sexual athleticism or ambivalence, his nostalgic religious zeal—to various one-dimensional creations.

His heroes are Hemingway romantics with danger-filled pasts, but inhibited by physical or psychological weakness, war wounds, amnesia or half-memories of violent events in their early years. We explore their lives through flashbacks or long-winded narrations embellished with political rhetoric. Often they are engaged in some enterprise that is worthless or destructive but which has been rationalized according to some higher ideal. They climb mountains that do not need to be climbed, produce movies that are artistic trash, pursue grizzly bears in a hunt that corrupts the hunters. They risk their lives in morally ambivalent symbolic acts: they violently storm the Pentagon on a "peace" march or invade Chicago in a protest which is morally right but (here I must disagree with him) symbolically empty. Each enterprise is in its own way a barbarous endeavor, taking its toll in moral integrity or human lives, revealing the beast within man.

In *The Naked and the Dead* Lieutenant Robert Hearn, who dies leading his reconnaisance patrol to a mountain top on a Pacific island, and Sergeant Sam Croft, who pursues the summit as passionately as Ahab pursued Moby Dick, represent two strains in American politics: the Harvard boy "Christian" bourgeois idealist, infatuated with Marxism and Melville; and the "Cannibal" war-lover, the White Texan Protestant who has renounced God and put his own thirst for power in God's place. Like Stephen Rojack in *An American Dream* (Dial, 1966), whom he foreshadows, Croft makes a religion of power and a ritual of courage.

Like the Pentagon in *The Armies of the Night,* Hearn's commander, General Cummings, personifies order, technology, the latent fascism—tinged with homosexuality—that will claim America for its own in the aftermath of World War II. For Cummings, the only morality is power morality. "There's one thing about power," Cummings tells Hearn. "It can flow only from the top down. When there are little surges of resistance at the middle levels, it merely calls for more power to be directed downward to burn it out." Cummings, of course, will return in later books. He is the diabolic millionaire Kelly in *An American Dream* and the mythical unseen power in Chicago who lifts the phone and orders the police to wade into the young and destroy them on the awful Wagnerian Wednesday night in front of the Hilton Hotel.

Postwar

Hearn returns as Sergius O'Shaughnessy in *The Deer Park* (Putnam's, 1955). In postwar Hollywood the combined forces of fascism and lust have triumphed. Art, which should be a symbol of liberation, has been commercialized into a symbol of perversion. The resort Desert D'Or is part hell, part Sodom and Gomorrah. Just as the lives of a generation were offered on the altar of totalitarian power in the Pacific war, the creative talent of O'Shaughnessey, who is trying to free himself from the memories of his orphaned boyhood and his napalm bombing raids by writing a novel, is squandered in a trashy "religious" film. Commercialism has usurped the role of religion and would-be artists are terrorized by McCarthyism.

But in *The Deer Park* Mailer's vision and his imagery have begun to move to a larger subject—the warning of universal apocalyptic destruction that will be brought about by uncontrolled technology and sexual failures that are symptoms of failures in society. In what might be *The Deer Park's* most significant scene, the bisexual pimp, Marion Faye, drives out alone in the night to a hill overlooking the New Mexico desert. Faye looks to the

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east and remembers the night in the great gambling city of the Southwest when he had gambled around the clock, "not even pausing at dawn when a great white light, no more than a shadow of the original blast somewhere further in the desert, had dazzled the gaming room and lit, with an illumination colder than the neon tube above the green roulette cloth, the harsh faces of the gamblers who had worked their way through the night." The citizens of America play on like the citizens of Sodom, while technological society feeds its new God, its nuclear furnace, preparing its own holocaust.

In *An American Dream*, Mailer united Croft and O'Shaughnessy in Stephen Rojack, the composite American "success"—a wounded war hero obsessed with brutal battle memories, ex-congressman, professor, commen-

tator and wife-murderer. The plot concerns Rojack's battle of wits with an inquisitor detective, but Mailer's purpose is to diagram a whole set of political and personal relationships representing various aspects of the an "American Dream" society rotten on every level.

An American Dream is also, in a bizarre way, Mailer's epitaph for the man on whom he would have liked to model himself—John Kennedy. In *Cannibals and Christians* (Dial, 1966) he depicts Kennedy as the Kierkegaardian hero, the man who *was* his own idea—half political opportunist, half Faustian adventurer—combining two halves of his personality to become the "movie star come to life as President." With the Kennedy face as the face of America, Mailer believed the old frontier America would once again risk its future—not knowing whether the face would, in its continual recreation, turn out to be Abraham Lincoln or Dorian Gray. It was as if the prisoners of *The Deer Park* had a chance to redeem themselves in this new millennial age. The President's murder made *An American Dream* a portrait of America as Dorian Gray; the death of the dream man, in Mailer's judgment, had thrown the nation back into its original chaos of which the dream man himself had been too intimate a part.

In the epilogue, Rojack drives west to Las Vegas. He stops in Missouri where he happens to view an autopsy of an old man who had died of cancer. The man is America. The stench of the cadaver follows him across the blazing sands to the gambling tables where, like Marion Faye, he plays and plays, and walks out into the desert night. He is given a vision not of an atomic blast but of a "jeweled city on the horizon"; but the jewels are not the amethysts and sapphires of the New Jerusalem, but the neon diadems of the new technology.

In *Why Are We in Vietnam?* (Putnam's, 1967) Mailer raises *Dream* to the nth degree. Technological America has exported itself, spread its galloping cancer to another land in the allegory of a grizzly hunt in Alaska. Armed with helicopters, high-powered rifles and credit cards, a party of rich barbarian Texans devastates the primitive Alaskan landscape in an orgy of egomaniacal self-assertion. The hunt, which in earlier American literature could have symbolized the American Adam's struggle to master his Eden, here symbolizes the last stages of degradation. And, as Eliot Fremont-Smith pointed out, Mailer's distressing emphasis on the uninterrupted rhetoric of anality in this beautiful repulsive work, reflects the distortion of the American image of masculinity and exposes the unrealized self-disgust of those who lust, or think they should lust, to verify virility in violence.

By *The Armies of the Night,* the story of the October 1967 Peace march against the Pentagon, Mailer frankly calls his hero Mailer and makes him a Jewish-Christian, God's millennial warrior against the schizophrenia in his own person. In this quasi-theological account of a key weekend in American history, the antithetical forces in our culture came face to face. The urban-bred college boys and flower children squared off against the town-bred paratroopers of their own generation. The marchers are "primitive" Christians, who interpreted Christianity in terms of "mystery" and peace, lining up in defiance of the "militant" Christians who have fallen into the corrupting embrace of the corporation. Mailer, Robert Lowell and Dwight MacDonald are cast in the roles of literary apostles proclaiming the gospel of dissent and inspiring a modern children's crusade against the military industrial high priests of Order. Here were the two Americas: the pure, old America, the Puritan conscience symbolized by Robert Lowell exuding as "unwilling saintliness," pitted against the new technological America, summed up in Lyndon Johnson and the American corporation executive, who does not mind burning unseen women and children in Vietnamese jungles, but who winces at dirty words.

In *Armies,* Mailer brings together the two main theological interpretations of American history: America as the new Eden, the primitive paradise that must keep itself innocent and, at the same time, set an example for the world; and the new Israel, the land of Joshua rather than the land of Adam, God's kingdom destined to be his Empire. The sober tone, maturity and detachment suggest that Mailer has begun to recover from the death of JFK. Redemption, through suffering, is still possible. After giving free range to his scatology and morbid pessimism in two apocalypses of doom, he has made this

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novel-as-history a muted apocalypse of hope. The march on the Pentagon is Eden's attempt to prove Cummings wrong. The children of Adam sense that either the Vietnam war will bring on the final conflagration of the world or that this strange pilgrimage of theirs, their ritual pot-smoking, their offering their bodies for arrest, their burning draft cards, their obscene placards, their exorcism of the great gray tome-like Pentagon, will usher in a new age, an Edward Hicks' "Peaceable Kingdom" where the wolf can lie down with the lamb.

Mailer's own grand moment comes following his arrest in his rush on the Pentagon. Given a chance to speak in court, he realizes he must deliver the best of himself to the microphones and reporters. It is Sunday, so he gives a Christian sermon: "You see, my fellow Americans, it is Sunday, and we are burning the body and blood of Christ in Vietnam. Yes, we are burning him there, and as we do, we destroy the foundations of this Republic, which is love and trust in Christ." And the author adds, "Wow."

A novelist who reaches too quickly for theological imagery to add substance to what otherwise might be flimsy material runs the risk of exposing his shallowness if the imagery is misapplied. If Christ is suffering through American actions in Vietnam, this could be Mailer's grand moment; if not, it is a cheap trick. The speech is consistent with the rest of Mailer's work. He does not merely toy with theological notions. Thoroughly absorbed as he is with almost every aspect of American culture, he interprets and challenges that culture just as the prophets challenged the ancient Jews. And for this modern hip prophet, the main sin is still infidelity to a religious heritage. His final paragraphs draw together the first and last books of the Bible. It is a romantic—almost embarrassingly nostalgic—plea to return to the American Eden juxtaposed against a vision of America heavy with child, groaning in labor. It is an obvious reference to the Woman of the Apocalypse (12:1); America is Israel struggling to give birth to a messianic savior.

The question now is whether the post-election mellowed Mailer, resigned to the return of the WASP to the center of American history and willing to explore what is alive in the conservative dream, will use the years of Nixon normalcy to retire to work on his "big" novel or whether he will continue to grow as what he essentially is—a moralist. It may be that as a nation we do not need a big novel as much as we need a brutal and fearless chronicle of what is happening to our life, interpretive records of our glorious and shameful moments—our conflicts and conventions—where we either honor or betray our belief in the immanence of God and the sanctity of life.

No one felt the ancient prophet's dream more strongly

JOHN STEINBECK, WRITER

WILSON C. McWILLIAMS AND NANCY R. McWILLIAMS

"If all the dew were diamonds," Pablo said, "we would be very rich. We would be drunk all our lives." . .

But Pilon, on whom the curse of realism lay uneasily, added, "Everybody would have too many diamonds. There would be no price for them, but wine always costs money. If it would only rain wine for a day, now, and we had a tank to catch it in."

John Steinbeck died out of favor with the left, but it had never understood him very well. The left's ideal cities, as Steinbeck saw them, were like Pablo's dew become diamonds: they went toward the end by routes so tortuous and indirect that they went nowhere at all. They were utopias in the literal sense: no place. If one indulges a dream, Pilon informs us, it makes sense to dream directly; diamonds are useful only to buy wine, and it is as sensible to dream of wine from the sky as dew become gemstones. And, Steinbeck might have added, as sensible to dream of brotherhood simply as to pursue it by expropriating the expropriators.

No one felt that ancient prophet's dream more strongly than Steinbeck did. Fraternity is the constant theme of all his books, the vision somehow never quite captured. Conning the devious ways of man with his fellows, Steinbeck followed all the old mysteries, the dark and bloody by-paths of the human spirit, and repeatedly he found fratricide where he would have found love. Even then, however, he kept to the prophet's way; he found a loving fratricide in *Of Mice and Men,* and in *East of Eden* his misrendering of Scripture may be truer than the texts: "thou mayest prevail . . ." He gave a dozen answers and the question never left him: given the fact that man may prevail, against what enemy?

Women sometimes appeared as the daemon, and some of his best works are tales of womenless men—or men and that perennial "one of the guys," the good prostitute. More often, it seemed to him ambition, the drive for dy-

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nasty and durability, the passion for possession of the earth and power. In the end, he would come full circle, returning to his earliest novels, and would find all men's temptations and delusions to be a flight from death, man's oldest companion, "the enemy who is worthy of Danny," brother death whom man must embrace if he is to meet his human brothers without fear and envy. And then the mystery would intrude and the circle would begin again. But he never lost the hope that the sky would one day rain wine.

Steinbeck was never a utopian because he was always a man with a place. He was a Californian, and his writings never succeeded very well when he tried to walk alien soil. Yet his California was a very special one, a narrow strip embracing Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo counties, sleepy California that time passed by. He ignored the great cities except in glimpses and if he wrote of other places, it was likely to be the New England village of *Winter of Our Discontent* or the Northwest orchards of *In Dubious Battle*. In a literal sense, he was a conservative, a man who valued and even clung to the old America; the real power of *Grapes of Wrath* is the savage anger at the impersonal process that uproots men from the land and rapes it, substituting rattletraps and highways for place and kindred.

In that sense, he was a romantic, sure that past times were far from perfect and yet possessed of virtues and qualities now lost, human even in their cruelties and stupidities as the industrial age is not. On Steinbeck, though, "the curse of realism lay uneasily." It was that very realistic romanticism that sent him into the depths of human passion, fear and hostility. It made him see the sad folly of Jim's "dubious battle," which he took up because "I feel dead. I thought I might get alive again." Joining a revolution to *find* a self, Steinbeck knew, is perverse: revolutions which matter can only be made by men who have selves. In fact, those who would find a self in revolt are only seeking to lose a self, to find a surrogate immortality in "working for something," for the party which will endure. And so it ends: "Comrades! he didn't want nothing for himself. . . .," the party orator intones over the corpse. The dew has turned to diamonds and the bottom has fallen out of the market.

Conservative and romantic, Steinbeck stuck to the sturdy rationalism that insists that the old questions will not be wished away, that the old virtues cannot be dispensed with, that the rule of first things first still applies. The direct route is the best, because the best cannot be captured unaware or bought cheap.

That did not make him lapse into quietism, or leave him indifferent to social reform. Far from it: compassion and concern lie on the direct route too. So, for that matter, does violence, and Steinbeck knew that there is a love which must take up the knife to slay another, because it is the same love which leads to a knowing willingness to sacrifice the self.

John Steinbeck doubtless wandered many times off the path, for the riddles he sought to answer are hard to read, and man at his best misses the way. But sooner or later he always seemed to find the way back—a good thought for his recent critics to hold, not only because it may reconcile them to Steinbeck but because it may cause them to wonder whether the same can or will be said of them.

Pilon complained, "It is not a good story. There are too many meanings and too many lessons in it. Some of those lessons are opposite. There is not a story to take into your head. It proves nothing."

"I like it," said Pablo, "I like it because it hasn't any meaning you can see and still it does seem to mean something, I can't tell what."

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DENIS SIVACK

IN MEMORIAM: THOMAS MERTON (1915-1968)

You flew, dove in blue denim,
cross-water
to a mountain abbey
where all windows
look inward.
I hear of your death from a friend.
A fallen olive branch
ripples in Monk's Pond:
green and gold shadow-spill,
seen by the hermit's lantern,
outlasts the tower struck by lightning.
The power that killed you
shatters inward windows;
carries the death message to us
by hot wire—
we understand it
in the power out of which you lived.
In dark time we remember your words:

Suppose the dead could crown their wit
With some intemperate exercise

Or if the wise could understand
And the world without heart
That the dead are not yet dead
*And the living live apart**

You have gone eastward, home
where the sun does not set.
The olive branch defies concentric law
passes the ripple outward—
the lantern flickers:
you touch us with tongue of flame
and the pond becomes a Holy Fire.

*Thomas Merton, "A Responsory, 1948"

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VLADIMIR IN DREAMLAND

JOHN HEIDENRY

1.

Vla-di-mir: the tip of the tongue taking a trip down the palate to stop, at three, on the teeth: Vla. De. Mirror. You can always count on a Nabonut for a fancy prose style.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, let us look at this tangle of dreams.

2.

St. Petersburg, 1904. In his father's study, Kuropatkin slouches heavily on the divan, trying to amuse him with a handful of matches, lining ten of them end to end in a straight line—"This is the sea in calm weather"—and then tipping each pair to turn the waters into stormy waves. Kuropatkin scrambles the matches and is about to do, the child hopes, a better trick, when the aide-de-camp rushes in with an urgent message. Kuropatkin, that day, is ordered to assume supreme command of the Russian Army in the Far East. With a Russian grunt he rises from his seat and departs, leaving the sea of matches awash on the study floor.

Fifteen years later, during Nabokov *père's* flight from Bolshevik-held St. Petersburg to Southern Russia, he is accosted while crossing a bridge by an old, sheepskin-clad, grey-bearded peasant who asks him for a light. In the orange glow of the wintry night the two men recognize one another as old friends. General Kuropatkin, in rustic disguise, had managed to evade Soviet imprisonment.

"But that is not the point. What pleases me is the evolution of the match theme: those magic ones he had shown me had been trifled with and mislaid, and his armies had also vanished, and everything had fallen through, like my toy trains that, in the winter of 1904-05, in Wiesbaden, I tried to run over the frozen puddles in the ground of the Hotel Oranien. The following of such thematic designs through one's life should be, I think, the true purpose of autobiography."

Ah, Vladimir, but that is only a point in the point. Do you recall . . . ? In my nervous cogitation—all these notions and ideas—. . . where does one begin? There is a very loud amusement park right in front of my present lodgings.

3.

Vladimir Nabokov is the greatest living prose writer in the English language, and perhaps its only great one. His perspicacious critic Andrew Field has remarked that in this century there have been only eight great novels—

JOHN HEIDENRY *is at work on a famous novel.*

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and only our Russian has written two. (What are the other six? *Ulysses,* certainly, and Proust, and perhaps Kafka. *Nostromo*? Firbank? Bely? And why not nine? Define, define. —A note in Ada Veen's wavering hand).

The first of these greats, *Lolita*, was written in 1954, during a summer interlude while he and his wife Vera were chasing butterflies somewhere in the meadows of Calais Fornya (N.W.)—though a decade earlier Edmund Wilson, on the basis of N.'s *Nikolai Gogol,* a nosy, nasty, loving recreation of the St. Petersburg genius, declared that, "in spite of some errors, Mr. Nabokov's mastery of English almost rivals Joseph Conrad's."

Lolita jokingly put the Pole to route and the Russian on his way—though all this evidence, ladies and gentlemen, did not prevent the judges of the National Book Awards from naming some Catholic novelist as fiction winner of 1962 over Mr. Field's second candidate among the immortal works: *Pale Fire,* which Mary McCarthy (another quote in the notes) has called "one of the very great works of art of this century." We can hardly help but agree with our good friend Val Lehane, a Zemblan national, who in his outrage complained that "this was the ultimately infamous example of what we Zemblans call *votchez litera;* in medieval terms: than which a greater travesty of literary justice cannot be imagined." Poor Val, dear friend: you know, of course, that a Jew will win this year and a Wasp the next time. *Gahr raghdirst belwif; gahr wid snew.* Save the mark.

4.

Anthony Burgess, who I hear writes a fair score of music, has said that Vladimir Nabokov, an exile *sans pays*—Russian-born, Cambridge-exiled, Cornell-imprisoned, now in residence in Switzerland (or somewhere) —has turned instead to a residence in language: to a pillow-rest of verbs and a no-doubt noun-sturdy chair, from where, I suppose, through the stained, adjectival glass he can see swallows darting, and that radiant shiver . . . Ah, well . . .

Nabokov, in fact, a sleight-of-land man of no mean excellence, lives—has lived, will always live—in what all Amerussian maps locate as New Wye, Appalachia, U.S.A. It is a place real because so intensely imagined: an upstate eastern suburb shaded in dormant elms; near, perhaps, any number of campuses and universities: Wordsmith, Cornell-on-the-Kaluga; near, to be sure, any number of heights and hills: Falk, of course, and McGraw, and especially Mount Glitterntin, the highest and hardest, where on clear days, far out to the east, beyond the Gulf of Surprise, one can distinguish a dim iridescence which some say is Russia.

What man could ask for a better, dreamier, more infinitely consoling, chummier, happier home, *un pays plus amicable?* Was England, Anthony, ever more real?

See Number 8 for further information on this point.

5.

Ada or Ardor: A family chronicle in five parts (McGross-Hill, $8.95. 589 pp.) is Vladimir Nabokov's first novel in seven years. As in *Pale Fire* and *Pnin* and *Lolita* before it, the clever, fast-paced story takes place somewhere in the environs of New Wye, this time presuburbian: "beyond Estotiland proper, in the Atlantic panel of the continent between elegant Kaluga, New Cheshire, U.S.A., and no less elegant Ladoga, Mayne." Not far away is the wild New England Yukonsk. There, at Ardis Hall, the ancestral Veen manor, our plot unfolds.

(To be continued.)

6.

Let us say that he may have countless passions, but that a few are more accountable for than others: language above all (down, Anthony, down, good dog), in three tingling-entangling tongues: English for the long stretch, French for the hard clichés of reality, and Russian for those gem-bright intimacies and endearments that glow (but do not light the way) along the misty, dream-specked time-space discontinuum of his artifice. Ladies and gentlemen, let us hear the witness speak: "My private tragedy, which cannot, and indeed should not, be anybody's concern, is that I had to abandon my natural idiom, my untrammeled, rich, and infinitely docile Russian tongue, for a second-rate brand of English, devoid of any of those apparatuses—the baffling mirror, the black velvet backdrop, the implied associations and traditions —which the native illusionist, frac-tails flying, can magically use to transcend the heritage in his own way."

On this three-petaled flower rests a pale, violet butterfly (*Nymphalis danaus* Nab.) who, peering in, intoxicated, falls tumbling through the dream-slow corridor and lands before an assortment of very queer fellows who seem to be having a party: over there is Vladenchka, the Mad Lepidopterist, and Humbert the Knave, and Kinbote the King-Queen, and of course dear Pnin, a gentle, harmless Russian rabbit who is scurrying always somewhere late late to find . . . the doors closed and the people gone. Dear Pnin.

Othersame nymphs are here: Lolita, who is 12, and Ada, who has the same quotient in years but far more in intellect. Who else? Oh, harlots and varlots. On Anagram Avenue or Crostic Cross you are likely to find, in infinitely time-squared number, Quilty with a mad sexual gleam in his eye leaning against a porch lattice, drinking warm beer, waiting with moth-eaten net to snatch at any young nit or nat that moves. Shade and Haze are there, away from the light. And in the yonder reaches: D'Argus the assassin and sad Fleur the undeflowered, and Luzhin the loser, and Fred, out back, fixing his car. O, a jolly company indeed.

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All of Vladimir Nabokov's interests take place in the inflowerite microworld of Dreamland: a world where, as we know, if you passionately hope hard enough, whatever you want will happen. (Or is that Oz?) Nabokov's first book was a translation of Lewis Carroll into Russian, and he has been translating him into English more or less ever since. "Central to an understanding" of Nabokov's idea of dream is his theory of time. We must now, unfortunately, go philosophical

7.

Time is a spiral (a flippy-flop spiral—the way butterflies fly). The spiral is a spiritualized circle, and twirl follows twirl, and every synthesis is the thesis of the next series. Did you get that? In spiralic time man can never die, because there Dream is the ultimate form of being. Dream is the mnemonic recollection of past, present, and future. (On the other hand, this may not be true. For further, perhaps corrective details, see Van Veen's *The Texture of Time,* pp. 537ff. Van to Ada: "You lose your immortality when you lose your memory.")

8.

Vision is technique, technique is vision (a rule of thumb of, I believe, Dr. Gus Undheit). For Nabokov, as for all poets, reality is language, word, metaphor, anagram: "I do think that in my case it is true that the entire book, before it is written, seems to be ready ideally in some other, now transparent, now dimming, dimension, and my job is to take down as much of it as I can make out as precisely as I am humanly able to. The greatest happiness I experience in composing is when I feel I cannot understand, or rather catch myself not understanding (without the presupposition of an already existing creation) how or why that image or structural move has just come to me. It is sometimes rather amusing to find my readers trying to elucidate in a matter-of-fact way these wild workings of my not very efficient mind."

Nothing exists outside of word; everything exists within it—even (Nabokov pre-eminently) the writer himself. The most real, the most illusive, the most diaphanous fictfact in Vladimir's dream-mirage-*mélange* is Nabokov himself.

. . . this same man who loafs about on sunny mornings in short beige pants and blue beret, reading the papers on a shaded bench near the blue Geneva lake. Later in the day he writes, outdoors, on small white index cards that are then diligently, lovingly read to his wife.

Occasionally now he plays chess, or works problems for the *Sunday Times* of London. Supper with Vera. I hear he does not like music. He also does not like Freud.

Let us play, not a game with matches, but a game of matching. A mirror game: for reflection. If Nabokov is indeed the greatest master of our prose, he is also its greatest since Joyce. Nothing comes of this game, and no one wins, but it is fun to play. There are no anagrams. (What is going on?)

JOYCE	NABOKOV
His childhood in a Dublin slum	His childhood in a St. Petersburg townhouse, and at Vyra, the country estate
Mulligan: "You killed your mother"	Pure and Proustian love for his mother (not pure Proustian)
Self-exiled from a reactionary country	Unself-exiled from a revolutionary country
Hates Yeats	Pushes Pushkin
Berlitz	Cambridge, Cornell
Multilinguist	Multilinguist
Father dies a drunk Lucia, his daughter, goes mad	Father is assassinated Dmitri, his son, translates his Russian works
Blind	Bald
His wife refers to *Ulysses* as chop-suey	See Number 8, paragraph 3
Dies broke	Signs multi-million-dollar contract

Two butterflies? Thesis and antithesis? And behold: far off, a man with a net shall come, stalking, over the faint, rolling hill . . .

The reader may now resume the game on his own.

9.

To Ardis then he came, burning, yearning: young, handsome, super-brilliant, handwalking Van, son of Aqua and Demon. Living there for the summer are Marina, Aqua's sister, a former actress, and Uncle Durak, and their fair-haired daughters Ada and Lucette (who is only 9). It is not long before the kissing cousins Van and Ada, bending in the hot attic sunlight over dusty cartons, discover among the family mementos that Uncle Demon had paid a hell-raising ha ha visit to Aunt Marina during the entr' acte of an American play based on a famous Russian romance that Marina was starring in back in 1871. Later, during a barn burning that sends all of the manor residents but two out with buckets of water and rickety pumps to pale the fire, the cousins/half-siblings

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inaugurate an ardent, incestuous love affair that continues throughout the book and long after: into memory and dream and death and life spiraling oneirologically upwards and away: Van and Ada alternately the black-violet, time-space, image-imaged, soaring wings of the one same butterfly. Their love life, of course—interrupted only by Ada's marriage to an Arizonian cattle-breeder who dies in 1922—is never a question of morality, but of mirrorality. A double standard, to be sure.

Ada represents Van's memoirs and incorporates his life-work, *The Texture of Time*. It is completed in his 97th year, though the purple-calf-skinned manuscript edition that is presented him is later found to be filled with red-inked alterations and revisions. In the margins are a number of notes in Ada's hand. Ada herself is a botanist and lepidopterist—and perhaps an ambivert as well (for the benefit, later on, of virginal Lucette). Together they live a long, passionate, hopeless, rapturous life where "reality and natural science are synonymous in terms of this—and only this—dream." For a valuable synopsis of the plot, see pp. 588-89.

Off the nabocuff for devotees: the Albino Riots; a Dr. Sig Heiler, "whom everybody venerated as a great guy and near-genius in the usual sense of near-beer"; Lucette: "a macédoine of intuition, stupidity, naïveté and cunning"; and much, much more.

"Not the least adornment of the chronicle," writes Van at the very end-beginning, "is the delicacy of pictorial detail: a latticed gallery; a painted ceiling; a pretty plaything stranded among the forget-me-nots of a brook; butterflies and butterfly orchids in the margin of a romance; a misty view described from marble steps; a doe at gaze in the ancestral park; and much, much more."

10.

Quotes for McHill's graw:

"Grossly engrossing."

"A thing of beauty and a joy for ever." (Permission needed to reprint.)

Note to Editor: there is a split infinitive on page 55, l. 6; and a misplaced modifier on page 62, l. 28ff.

11.

Vladenchka, do you still dream
Of things that are not what they seem?

Of things transpiraled through time and space,
Made lovelier in a better place?

My father, yes I still recall
The Blue Ladore and Ardis Hall.

And is there honey still for tea?
And is there yet a place for me?

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DOING ISADORA

THE SCREEN

In reviewing "Salesman" last week I wondered how real, how truthful movies can be in portraying real people, and then realized in discussing this extraordinary documentary that even such good film makers as the Maysles Brothers, who followed four Bible salesmen on their routes for six weeks, cannot tell the whole truth even with *cinéma-vérité* techniques. After all the hand-held-camera pictures are taken, they must be edited and put together to make the whole picture; and the cutting and editing result in selection that presents a point of view. A good documentary like "Salesman" tells the truth as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough to present a complete picture.

An even less complete picture then is presented when movies do a biography of a famous person now dead. The movie may stick to the facts, but even they have to be adjusted to fit the interpretation; and frequently, even in such outstanding biographical films as "Pasteur," "Zola," "Lust for Life," "Wilson," "The Great Zeigfeld," it is Paul Muni, Kirk Douglas, William Powell, *et al.* who are as important as the reconstruction of period and place. Perhaps most important, however, is the film maker's interpretation.

I found myself fascinated by cinema's latest venture into biography "The Loves of Isadora," and the fact that this once-too-long movie has been shortened from 177 minutes to 131 minutes since it first opened in December in Los Angeles, and its title changed from the simple "Isadora" is not the really important thing at all. What is important to "The Loves of Isadora" as it now stands is the handsome production given the film by Robert and Raymond Hakim, the excellent direction of Karel Reisz, and most of all, the first-rate performance by Vanessa Redgrave as Isadora Duncan. Isadora is often credited with the being the originator of the modern dance. She was not interested in spectacle but in communication. Convinced that all expressive movement of the dance sprang from emotions and the soul, she swept away the dance conventions of the past, especially all artificiality

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and theatricality, and she stressed natural movements and lyrical art. She shocked audiences not only by discarding corsets but also by removing her shoes and stockings. However, Isadora shocked audiences not only for her innovations in the dance, but also in her personal morality. Right at the beginning of the film we see young Isadora swearing she would never marry but would devote herself to truth and beauty. She was a great devotee of Keats, but would, of course, interpret truth and beauty in her own way.

The screenplay, written by Melvyn Bragg and Clive Exton from the Duncan autobiography and Sewell Stokes' *Isadora Duncan, an Intimate Portrait*, doesn't have the most real or brilliant dialogue in the world, but it does have an interesting pattern. Starting in 1927 (the year of Isadora's death) we see the 49-year-old Isadora dictating her memoirs; and as she moves back and forth in time (not in sequence) the events, especially the three big loves of her life, are visualized. Her wild affair with Gordon Craig (James Fox), a meeting of soul mates, has a Bohemian lyrical quality. After her baby is born, Craig leaves her to go back to his famous scenic designs. Next affair is with Paris Singer (Jason Robards) of the sewing machine fortune; he is a more staid individual, but they don't marry either. Isadora gives birth to his son, seems somewhat cramped on his beautiful English estate even though Singer adores her and lets the children in her school romp all over the place. After the dreadful accident in which both of her children are killed (Isadora really loved them and is crushed), this long-standing affair breaks up. Her last big love is with the Russian poet Sergei Essenin (Ivan Tchenko) who, though considerably younger than the dancer, is as wacky as she is. This guy she marries—but only so she can bring him to the United States—where the two of them almost cause a riot one night when he spouts anti-American stuff, and she practically disrobes on stage to hold her audience.

In spite of the film's good cast, Vanessa Redgrave as Isadora is really the whole show. Called Bohemian in her day, Isadora now would be called a kook or perhaps even a hippie. It is amazing how well Miss Redgrave runs the gamut: the pretty wilful girl, the dancer bubbling with new ideas (Vanessa dances well, perhaps not as well as Duncan, herself, but Duncan was not the world's best either), the passionate lover (wildest in scenes with that crazy Russian), the devoted mother—and then always coming back in the picture to 1927 and the middle-aged, once-famed dancer with dyed hair and wrinkled face. The performance is brilliant and successfully transcends the often silly person Isadora was. This film about her should appeal to young and old—but certainly not to puritans.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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MALOFF/WRITERS & WRITING

THE IMPOTENCE OF BEING ERNEST

Carlos Baker's massive biography of Ernest Hemingway arrives at a time when his subject's literary reputation suffers from far more than the usual melancholy decline that, by some merciless law, follows upon a writer's death. By the time of his suicide in 1961, when he knew better than anyone that he was utterly exhausted, Hemingway had already been dead for some time to at least one generation of American writers. Snarl as he might at critics and detractors, and however much he surrounded himself with sycophants and soothsayers, he could scarcely protect himself from the knowledge that he had long since been blocked in ice as a school classic; that, with a few scattered exceptions, critics regarded his early work as his best work; that the young read him dutifully, perhaps admiringly, but listened themselves to other voices.

For them, he might as well have been an ancient Roman. The attitudes and postures which his name automatically evoked had nothing to do with contemporary obsessions; the famous style, having passed into and out of the literary language—having done its necessary work of housecleaning—had become a manner that hack feature-writers could, and did by the dozen, easily ape. In fact, by those imitations his own later manner stood cruelly exposed for the bare thing it was when it no longer had a great subject to grind against; it had become a way of punching out sentences and putting together paragraphs that fifth-rate novelists who had neither style nor vision of their own could appropriate entire, as they never could do, even if they had the wit to will it, with his most formidable contemporaries, Fitzgerald and Faulkner. *To Have and Have Not* is best forgotten; *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was a "book club" novel . . . there is no point in ticking off the failures; the habit was, with the appearance of each of them, to speak of "self-parody." Long after they were played out in his art, he continued in his life to play out the games that had been his subjects.

Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story
CARLOS BAKER
Scribner's, $10

Games not subjects—so they now seemed; the spectacle was embarrassing, scandalous. Thirty years after *The Sun Also Rises,* when no one but tourists and editors of picture magazines cared passionately for bullfighting, Hemingway was still chasing *numero uno* all over Spain—the commission, of course,

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was fine, yet one feels he would have gone gladly at his own expense. Decades after *A Farewell to Arms,* a war was still a war—Spain, World War II, Korea . . . great God, Korea! The man actually offered to serve in Korea, under his friend General "Buck" Lanham, who was one of his principal heroes. He seemed in all those burly, grizzly photographs of himself belaboring the biggest fish and pursuing the ultimate lion—he looked like another eccentric gringo businessman, with an unseemly taste for blood, going native on a three-week vacation. He seemed worse than that —an aging clown learning the latest fast dances; and he seemed worse precisely because he was one of the writers who had in his time made over the art of narrative, who had once fashioned a language for fixing a certain range of feeling.

Then, the language had become debased; the feelings they enabled had become a cluster of adolescent posturings; the quality of the work declined disastrously. Rumors about him, at first appalling, became steadily more credible; and when at last the final report was made public, everyone felt, not without reason, he had known all along that was how it had to end. A man can survive himself only so long.

Carlos Baker's admirable book must have been a very difficult one to write for a biographer who as a critic so admired his subject. Hemingway's life was so huge, messy, chaotic, sprawling, erratic, sundered—full of wives and women (he called them, quaintly, "womens"); kids and hangers-on; triumph and defeat; ups and downs; voyages and deaths. By contrast, Faulkner lived the quiet life of an inconspicuous country gentleman who stayed home and tended his fires; and even Fitzgerald's life, for all its pathos, was a model of coherence. The overwhelming temptation, which has lured some critics (and memoirists) into committing all sorts of mischief, is to see Hemingway's life and art as in the simple sense co-extensive, to read back and forth from one to the other his lifelong pursuit of pain and death in the one, and the felt pressures of death and madness in the other —that sense of catastrophe, of something "sinister," which forms the shadows in the reaches of his best work. The more we learn about the life the more impressed we are with his incapacity to imagine lives other than his own actual and dreamed one.

Scrupulously to resist the temptation to psychologize and moralize, so that he could get on with the arduous labors of assembling the chronicle, was on balance a wise decision on Baker's part. In any case, it is just as well, for when he does on rare occasions weaken, the results are far from satisfactory. It won't do, though it seems a harmless flippancy, to speak of "Ernest the Good" and "Ernest the Bad," when the record of wild mood-swings and affective cycles of bewildering speed, of almost excessive kindness and generosity one moment and unforgivable savagery the next, of inarticulate shyness, genuine sweetness and compassion alternating with trumpeting megalomania—when, in short, the (one, not being as strong as Baker, cannot resist it) *clinical* record clamors for the biographer's intervention. Nor will it do, for another example, to have done with Hemingway's "plague," throughout his adult life, of insomnia and nightmares (to stop merely with those) by marking them up to a "highly developed imagination." The biographer's choice is a hard one—to let it go at that, when it becomes impossible simply to say *nothing*; or to try one's twitching hand at a bit of psychobiography.

Instead, Baker, to his credit, presents the materials of the "life story," the good with the bad, sparing little if anything. That Hemingway could be ugly was all along notorious—the portrait of Harold Loeb as Robert Cohn (the vitriol motivated, at least in part, by sexual jealousy); the infamous parody of his benefactor Sherwood Anderson in *The Torrents of Spring;* and more recently, in the posthumous *A Moveable Feast,* the spitefulness toward Gertrude Stein, Ford Madox Ford, Fitzgerald and others. Yet even knowing all that, and more, one is not quite prepared for the full play of his spleen and still less pleasant organs. The "occasional anti-Semitic outbursts" ("low-down Kike and a string of other epithets") can be shrugged off: better writers have muttered worse. What is far less easy to take than all his callow nastiness is the pattern of sheer brutality, moral and physical, that can't be written off to mere "badness," or manly high spirits, or any ordinary perverseness or malformation of spirit. He harassed and bullied and threatened—when he wasn't being courtly to courtiers, flattering to flatterers. He was forever slugging somebody, or swearing to get him next time. He was envious, bad-tempered, hectoring—a swaggering braggart. He was "immensely proud" of the time he demolished a rich publisher named Knapp by "clipping" him with two fast left hooks, "clubbing" him twice behind the left ear, and putting him away, stone cold, with his "Sunday punch." (A scholar of quiet habits, Baker sometimes can't help but admire his man's form.) At the top of his prowess, in superb shape from a season of fighting fish in Bimini, EH, weighing in at over 200 pounds of muscle, offered $250 to any black man who could go three rounds with him. He had takers, but he kept his money. $250 was a lot of money in Bimini in 1935, and is nothing to sneeze at now.

A world-beater, the uncrowned champ didn't stop at rich yachtsmen and poor "niggers." Speaking of a book he was working on, he told his publisher he was "trying to knock Mr. Shakespeare on his ass"; the book, brace yourself, was *Across the River and Into the Trees.* Had he run into the great white hope from Stratford in a dark London alley along about 1603, he would no doubt have taken him out with one beautiful left hook off a perfect jab. He practiced for the bout against Wallace Stevens, an insurance man from Hartford who had written some doggeral that Hemingway admired. "For reasons that remain obscure," Baker writes, "the poet seems to have baited the novelist into some sort of fight." Any tanktown promoter might have raised a few questions about the fight as a *match,* what with Stevens giving away twenty years and

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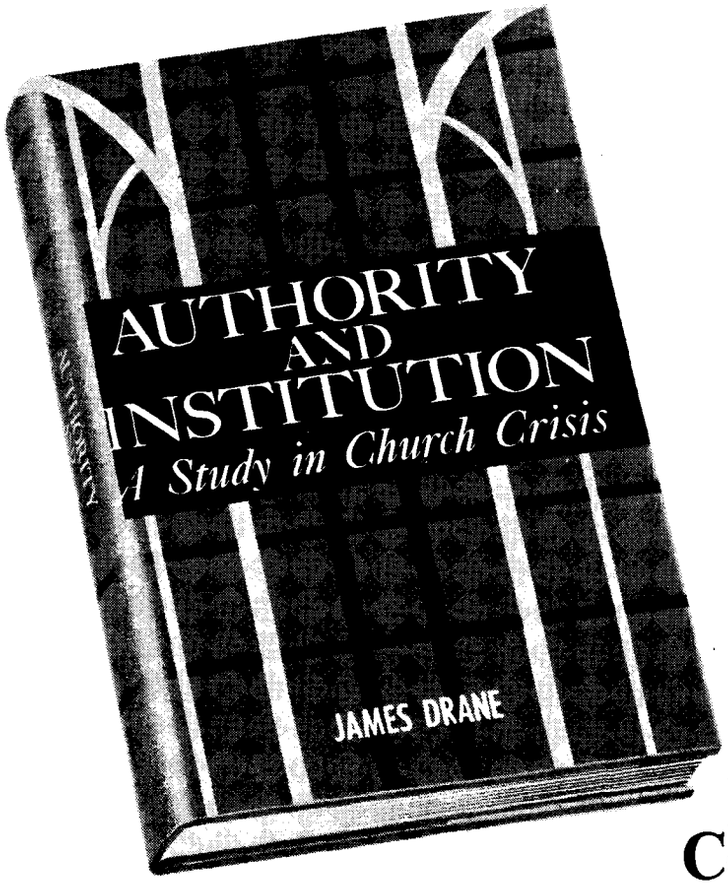

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not knowing which hand to stick out first, apart from being flabby as deskmen are, and in awful shape generally. The blubbery Connecticut powderpuff emerged with a black eye and a badly bruised face. One thing you can say about old Hem is that he was not a man to walk away from anything that looked at all promising.

Baker had all this to contend with. He didn't set out to write a "critical biography," having already written a critical work on Hemingway; and he doesn't pretend to a "definitive" one. For one thing, too many of the victims are still alive. But Baker does well what he set out to do—assemble the "life story." The definitive biographer, working on the motherlode a generation from now, will have to start from here.

The astonishing fact remains, all else said, that it can be said of Hemingway, as it can of only a very few writers in our literature, including great ones, that he left an enduring impression on the shape and sound of American prose, taught ways of feeling about a certain order of experience, and that he provided some lasting models of how tales can be told.

BOOKS

From vulgar Marxism to crude psychological determinism

The Conflict of Generations

LEWIS FEUER

Basic Books, $12.50

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

This is a thoroughly deplorable book. A hateful attack on the younger generation, it is the work of a man who is described by the publishers as "himself a student rebel as a young man in the 1930s." That is a curious way to evoke Feuer's association with the American Communist Party, during which he apparently acquired that tone of hectoring simplification which is his substitute for argument. He now manifests, in succession to the vulgar Marxism of his youth, a crude psychological determinism. The work is a disguised confession, the record of an exceedingly conventional ideological career.

In its external form, it is a parody of scholarship. Detail upon detail, anecdote upon anecdote, and the ceaseless—nay, obsessive—reiteration of a few basic ideas constitute its method. The histories of the most diverse societies (America, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, and Africa, Asia and Latin America) serve to illustrate these ideas. They may be summarized, rather easily: they are not, indeed, excessively complex. Human society alternates between generational equilibrium and generational conflict. During periods of conflict, the universal prevalence of the Oedipal complex combines with the elder generation's loss of authority to convert the young into revolutionaries. Their revolutionary impulses triumph, invariably, over their revolutionary aims. The negative and destructive components in the psyches of the young become predominant. What really interests them is the terroristic destruction of the existing order rather than its replacement by a more rational or a more just one. Their hatred for the parents, in other words, is far more important than their love of humanity.

If the young seek allies amongst the oppressed, the peasants in Russia, the workers in France, the blacks in our own society, they are soon disappointed in these groups. The alliance brings the young no surcease from psychological oppression, and their hatred soon turns into guilt. Their guilt, finally, renders them suicidal. All rational politics cast aside, they turn to self-destruction. All generational conflicts are subject to these psychological laws. All, therefore, are foreordained to moral and political failure. Worse yet, their destructiveness provokes repression on the part of society. Not only do generational revolts invariably fail in their proclaimed libertarian intentions: the young actually make society worse than they found it.

Feuer employs a bewildering *mélange* of evidence; all of it treated as if of equal value: narrative, the imagery of generational protest, biographies of the protesters, statistics. I have used the term *employs*, advisedly. The ideas come first, the facts must—and do—follow. Seldom has a social scientist proceeded so mechanically with so subtle a problem; seldom has so much history been distorted in such brief compass. The book takes into account no ambiguities, and few complexities. The educated sectors of the population have increased greatly in size over the past generations, and their social functions have changed considerably. Feuer ignores these changes, as he ignores the available clinical evidence which suggests that our own student revolutionaries enjoy quite harmonious relationships, generally, with their parents. The book, in fact, is not about the succession of generations but concentrates quite exclusively on student movements. The generational hypothesis is a club with which Feuer beats them.

The author begins in the nineteenth century with the European student movements, whom he holds responsible for most of the ills of modern European history. The German students of the early nineteenth century, by their attack on Metternich's servitors, "set back for a generation the liberal aspirations of the German people." It does not take much knowledge of modern Germany to know, after all, that the German people are conspicuous for their lack of any liberal aspirations

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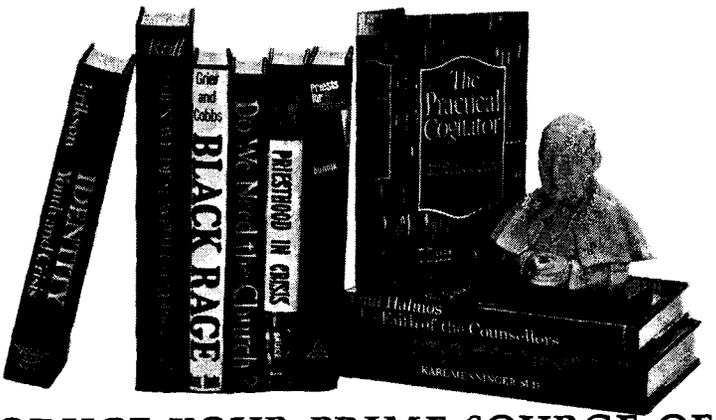

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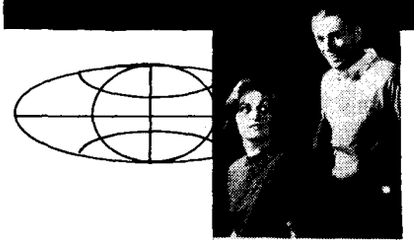

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whatsoever. The Russian students are held responsible for the failure of constitutional reform, while upon the Bosnian students falls the responsibility for the first world war. Had they not assassinated the Archduke Ferdinand, Europe would have remained at peace. It is with some relief, after all of this, that we arrive at a criticism of the present French student generation: they do not take summer jobs, but prefer instead to take vacations. A minimal acquaintance with French society would have spared Feuer the embarrassment of attaching his name to observations of this sort. Perhaps, however, a defense of philistinism is easier for an author devoid of cosmopolitanism. The footnotes on the contemporary European student movements in western Europe, indeed, show no very great knowledge of the relevant sources. The author's historical and comparative ventures do have a point: to attribute to the new American student movement the responsibility for poisoning American life. We are told that the Watts rioters were inspired by Berkeley.

America, in Feuer's view, has until now been a land of generational equilibrium. Students, while not conspicious for their intellectual zeal, did refrain from rocking the boat. If American students in the past were unresponsive to radical critiques of society, and if many remain so today, their attitude reflects an instinctive recognition of the irrationality of the radicals—not comformity. Indeed, the much criticized conformity of the 1950s was not due to the pressure of a public opinion subservient to McCarthyism, but to the wretched behavior of those intellectuals who refused to acknowledge their radical pasts, and who attempted in cowardly fashion to save their livelihoods by hiding behind the Fifth Amendment. The present wave of student revolt in America, Feuer suggests, is a danger to American democracy. Left undisturbed by the students, our society—thanks to the eminent good sense of the American electorate—would continue to present to the world a successful experiment in liberalism and pluralism.

Feuer's description of the Berkeley revolt of 1964-5, which he experienced as a teacher at the University of California, indicates that he has other objections to the new student generation. He describes them as, variously, dirty, smelly, sexually perverse, intellectually lazy and morally dishonest. He does reserve a good measure of contempt for those of his colleagues who found some merit in the students' case. The one person he selects for especial attack (of a quality of viciousness not usually found in books published by reputable firms) is Paul Goodman, a writer who did much to shape the temper of the American 60s. Curiously, Feuer (who began his career as a philosopher) does not mention Herbert Marcuse at all—despite Marcuse's influence on the European and American student movements. The attack on Goodman and the singular omission of Marcuse do suggest that Feuer might profit by turning his knowledge of psychoanalysis upon himself.

The French students were enjoined to solve their problems by taking summer jobs. American students in the technical fields are praised for their resistance to the temptations of critical thought to which education in the social sciences and humanities exposes them. A more scholarly approach to the sources would have informed Feuer that the European student revolt encompasses students of science and technology.

The end of the book does put Feuer in a dilemma, however. Recounting his meeting with a new generation of Russian students, he speculates on the chances for student revolt in the Soviet Union. Yet if student revolt is everywhere harmful, Feuer may face some painful political choices: the section in question is, unlike the rest of this book, very brief.

The book, then, is an essay in psychological denigration. It is also an onslaught upon the critical uses of mind. Consider those remarks on the career of Walter Lippmann. "One gathers that his student socialist loyalties separated him for some crucial years from

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the main current of American existence: he was then cast in the role of sideline coach, adviser, and commentator, critical intellectual rather than man of creative leadership, for which he evidently had all the powers." What special virtue attaches to identification with a main current? Does not the characterization of Lippmann indicate that Feuer despairs of the positive social value of his own work?

A critical study of the student movements, utilizing psychological insight and historical scholarship, remains to be written. The contemporary American student movement requires severe criticism, and it is one of our tragedies that an older generation in the universities has retreated in such panic from its own youth that it is incapable of sympathetic comprehension of the young. No doubt, the conflict of generations is a recurring theme in history. It awaits as a chronicler a scholar more learned, more serene, and more just.

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Thus *Bullet Park*, about the worthy bourgeois family. On being introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Nailles, we are warned that at their breakfast table they may appear "to have less dimension than a comic strip." Eliot Nailles, head of the Mouthwash Division at Saffron, loves his wife and monogamy, his son and parenthood, and loves his faithful old dog Tessie and God's creation. His wife, Nellie, is interested in flower arrangements and such artistic ventures as painting by numbers. They're nice.

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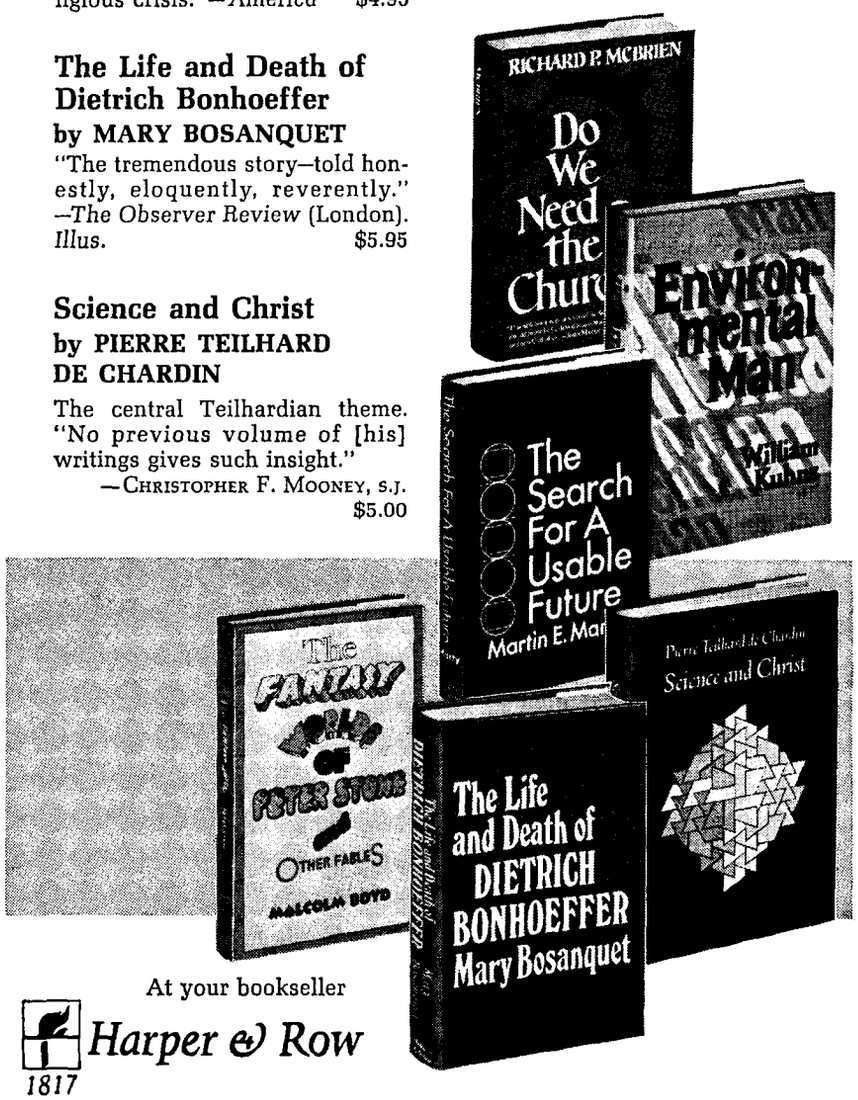

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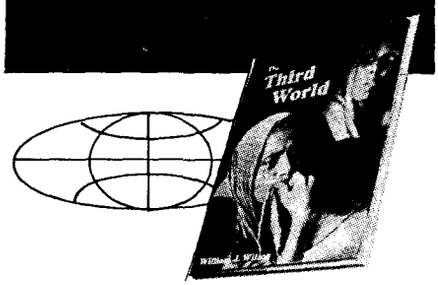

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self to go to work unless he is drugged out of his skull.

Their only child, Tony, 17, takes to bed for 22 days with what appears to be a spiritual complaint and doubts the value of the honkie life. After several professionals fail, Swami Rutuola, a responsible black, cures him by getting him to say "love" and "hope."

In the novel's unsuccessful second part, Paul Hammer is traced through his experiences with the underside of the life before moving to Bullet Park. Mental depression, which he attempts to dodge through heavy drinking and flight, dogs him, but he finds that he can be soothed by the magic of a yellow room. He finds such a room in the home of Dora Emmison, but she refuses to sell, and is killed in a traffic accident 15 minutes after drinking with him.

Flip back to Part One. A fellow-commuter, remember, standing with Hammer and Nailles on the platform, was sucked under a train (or possibly committed suicide) and the Nailles family problems surfaced with Hammer's arrival. Does he give off bad vibrations? Cheever only hints at it. Hammer, the bastard son of socialists, believes his gloom to be more than a private matter to be privately endured, that it has something to do with the culture. After such knowledge, what forgiveness?

Hammer decides to kill Nailles, whom he regards as a paragon of the culture, as an act of moral creation. He later chooses Tony as alternate victim, and Tony's dad saves him in an unbelievable showdown scene.

Surprise, reversal, the curious and incongruous enhance Cheever's impressive gift for narrative. He uses such effects to heighten the feel of the mysterious rather than to depict an absurd universe. Turtles shot in the primordial dawn, sudden fires that preserve sexual fidelity, games of miniature golf played on ruined and abandoned courses—all testify, in burnished prose, to a "bewildering" but providential universe.

Are they epiphanies of truth, or evasions of truth? That may be an ideological question. Sometimes life mystifies; but Cheever commits mystification. His description of the first day that Nailles finds himself unable to stay on the train serves as an example.

The dirty train windows, overcast sky, the previous day's fatal accident on the platform depress him. He peruses what reads like "news from another planet" of wars, snipers, pollution, strikes—and can make no sense out of these perplexing, unconnected events:

"The trip seemed intolerable, but why? He had made it a thousand times. Why should this link between his home and his office seem torturous? . . . Nailles' sense of being alive was to bridge or link the disparate environments and rhythms of his world, and one of his principal bridges—that between his white house and his office—had collapsed."

By this point he stands, bewildered, in a station along the way. Pretty mystifying, right? Any truck driver, though with less elegance, could tell him the trouble right off. Nailles can't stand his job.

The creation of far-fetched situations also distances us from their full import. A thirtyish widow, after Tony has met and slept with her in New York, takes up his invitation to come to the Nailles home for Sunday dinner. Everybody plays it cool, gets through it. Tony's invitation is really an aggressive act in his sexual rivalry with his father. By what appears to be subtleties, Cheever softens the contours of his story.

Through these means—which amount to evasions—Cheever gamely but unconvincingly tries to validate bourgeois life, to rehumanize the stereotype of the plastic suburbanite. Eliot's sentimental piety is explained as his homage to mystery; Nellie's house-pride, so tiresome in real bourgeois women, expresses her warmth (the rooms seem to be "partly illuminated by her graces," which saves electricity); Nailles shuffles papers in the cause of sweeter breath; and at the close, "everything was as wonderful, wonderful, wonderful, wonderful as it had been."

Which means that Nailles, still wondering, has Compozed himself in a positive way, without raising any questions about his life. Hammer, you see,

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was destructive, wanted to break things down, and this force of evil has been dealt a blow. We have to build, not burn. This static and dualistic view, though inadequate for the creation of literature, expresses the editorial policy of our responsible journals, and qualifies him for all manner of bourgeois awards. I hereby nominate him for the National Book Award, the Pulitzer Prize, the Walt Disney Teen-age Decency Award, the Nobel Prize for Literature, and the Presidency of the United States.

The Reformation in Germany

JOSEPH LORTZ

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HARRY J. McSORLEY

In the first decade of this century two German Catholic scholars, Heinrich Denifle and Hartmann Grisar, published massive studies on Martin Luther. Their books had two things in common: each was essentially a put-down of Luther, an attempt to explain his break from the Church in terms of a voluntary or an involuntary personality disorder; secondly, each was translated into English within a few years after publication in Germany. For over half a century these works have almost exclusively shaped the attitude of English-reading Roman Catholics toward Luther.

Joseph Lortz's *Die Reformation in Deutschland*, published in two volumes in 1939/40, contrasts sharply with the work of his fellow-Catholic predecessors on both counts: instead of presenting Luther as morally or psychologically warped, Lortz sees him as a genuinely religious man bent upon reforming a Church that had much that needed reformation; secondly, Lortz's work, which has gone through four German editions and which has almost single-handedly altered the whole approach of Catholic Luther scholarship in northern Europe, was *not* translated into English until 1968! This fact alone serves as a symbolic commentary on the state of ecumenism in the post-World War II, pre-Vatican II English-speaking Catholic world.

Instead of dwelling on the bad old days, let us rejoice that Lortz is finally available in English and congratulate the publishers. True, some of Lortz's work was made available in 1964 (*The Reformation: A Problem for Today* and *How the Reformation Came*) and some inkling of the newer Catholic Luther scholarship reached us in Bouyer's *The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism* (1961) and Todd's *Martin Luther* (1964). But those were hors d'oeuvres. This is the entree and it is delicious. The main complaint one can make about it is that, since it was not served immediately, it is a trifle cold.

As the title indicates, this is more than a study of Luther. Lortz begins by offering us a superb description of the causes and the "presuppositions" of the Reformation. He follows up his treatment of Luther's development from monk to Reformer by surveying, in Volume II, the political and ecclesio-

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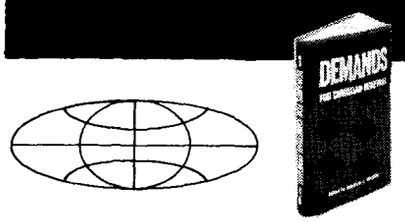

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political realignment that took place in Germany after Luther's excommunication. This is followed by a detailed picture of the Catholic reformation up to and including Trent, a critique of the first Catholic apologists/polemicists and an evaluation of the early, abortive efforts at reunion. The second volume closes with the peace of Augsburg of 1555, which "set the seal on the dismemberment [not "dismembership"] of Germany."

Lortz's account of the pre-Reformation Church, especially his long chapter on "Religious Life before the Reformation," is surely one of the most valuable parts of the book. He spares no pejorative adjective in describing the clericalism in the late medieval Chuch with its attendant corruption in high and low places. One never ceases to be astonished by the information that, on the eve of the Reformation, the estimated number of clergy and nuns in Germany alone was 1,400,000! Lortz is equally candid in telling us of the pitiful state of the liturgy, a factor that prompted much of the questionable, if not superstitious, devotionalism and "works-piety" among the laity.

As Lortz convincingly demonstrates, however, there is another side of the ledger which records a genuine reform spirit in many monasteries as well as a truly Christian lay spirituality "alongside the corruption, within it, and above it." While refusing to accept "the fable about Catholic work-righteousness that knew nothing of the Bible, of trust in [God], of love . . . , or of true faith," Lortz is nevertheless forced to conclude that "in spite of the admitted presence of genuine spirituality . . . , in practice, the behaviour of many, if not most Catholics, gave the impression that heaven was to be bought by good works."

Far worse than the moral and spiritual decline of the late medieval Church, says Lortz, was the emergence of a spirit of dogmatic relativism that helped foment a widespread theological unclarity apart from which "the Reformation is incomprehensible." With Lortz's thesis that on the eve of the Reformation there was a disastrous theological unclarity (not on every point of dogma, to be sure), this reviewer is in full agreement. But I part company with Lortz when he tries to make Erasmus the arch-perpetrator of "an undogmatic view of Christianity." In my recent book on Luther I have brought forth evidence against this opinion, which Lortz shares not only with a host of other Catholic and Protestant scholars, but also with Luther himself. Negligence in the exercise of the late medieval papal and episcopal teaching ministry seems to me to have been, incomparably more than Erasmus, the main cause of the theological unclarity in the Church of Luther's day. Does not Lortz himself suggest this when he writes, in a sentence that will surprise many twentieth century Christians, that the pre-Reformation Church "tolerated a carelessness in the expression of religious opinions, which gave too much latitude to freedom, and became a dangerous temptation"?

The most disastrous example of such doctrinal carelessness is seen in the re-emergence of the old semi-Pelagian (not Pelagian, as Lortz has it) error in precisely that current of late Scholasticism in which Luther was formed, which Oberman calls the Ockham-Biel wing of Nominalism. Although Lortz has exaggerated the un-Catholic quality of this "school" and the extent of its *positive* influence on Luther, he is fully correct in pointing out its erroneous

REVIEWERS

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doctrine of grace and free will which had an enormous *negative* influence on the Reformer. Luther learned this "uncatholic" doctrine from his Catholic teachers. Through his biblical studies and his reading of Augustine he gradually became aware, most likely by 1516, that he had been grossly misled by his teachers. And then the Reformation began.

Despite the many modifications that have to be made in the light of subsequent research, Lortz's *magnum opus* still remains an eminently readable and rewarding guide through this most complex and tragic period of the Church's life. The translator deserves praise for matching the literary quality of Lortz's original prose. One imprecision worth pointing out is that Lortz's much-cited sentence: "Luther was a "religiöser Mensch" means: he was a religious man —not: "a man obsessed by religion."

Do We Need the Church?

RICHARD McBRIEN

Harper & Row, $6.50

DANIEL C. MAGUIRE

In a glutted market, it verges on supreme compliment to say of a book that it should be read. McBrien's book merits such praise. It should be read and, indeed, read now, because the debate it reflects and significantly furthers could in short order spell obsolescence, even for such a forward-looking book as this. Such is the price of asking the right questions in an exploding area.

Recognizing that the right question today is not whether the Church should be renewed but whether the Church should *be*, McBrien finds a happy, umbrella-like rubric to cover his case. He refers to the old (but still extant) Ptolemaic ecclesiology which sees the Church as the critical center of God's redeeming enterprise. He calls for a Copernican rejection of this grand assumption: "It is the Kingdom and not the Church which is the only theological absolute." Christians are also called to an Einsteinian Revolution, to a recognition of radical relativity and accelerating change in the concepts and structures of their religion.

McBrien moves off freely from the inadequacies and "theological schizophrenia" of Vatican II and faces many of the implications of his ecclesiological revolution. All men and all Christians are not called to be members of the Roman Catholic Church. When one leaves the Roman Church, the "change is one of specification and not necessarily one of substance." (He gives considerable attention to Charles Davis.) Revelation is not an exclusively Christian thing nor is it closed. The world of the believer is not bathed in false certainties. Absolute evidence does not exist. "The nonbeliever could be right." The notion of heresy, "ossified in the Code, has indeed expired." Also dismissed is the historically understandable but theologically indefensible notion of the Pope as supertheologian.

McBrien tries to point toward a notion of Church that avoids the idolatries of the all too historical Church-mysticism . . . the excesses of the

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"Bellarmine-Tromp-*Mystici Corporis* axis." He also shies from a reductionist functionalism that would make the Church into a joyous band of agapeic idealists. His secularity is not adolescent. He is not afraid of mystery or embarrassed by sacramentality.

One weakness of McBrien's book may be that he does not stress the Einsteinian Revolution as much as the Copernican. He does admit, in a footnote, that "the structural components of the Church cannot be regarded as absolute" and he alludes once to the institutional structures as "about to go into the melting pot." Still, he entertains some untested presuppositions about the necessity of certain High-churchy forms and he has a fundamentalist leaning toward "the normative ecclesiology of the New Testament." Even if one took the Scriptures as literally normative, the example found there is liberating and an invitation to creativity. Offices were shaped or discarded according to need and not according to an eternally valid blueprint bequeathed by Jesus. McBrien would have done well to accost the caste-making theology of the indelible priestly "character." He could also have done more helpful surgery on the concept of episcopacy which now passes as *jure divino*. Also, his tendency to equate "the teaching Church" with the hierarchical magisterium helps to perpetuate the bad old myth which, by divine right, gave the last word in theology to the non-theologians. When it comes to Church structures, a lot of strange ideas have been blamed on God. It is one of the noble tasks of theology to get God off these hooks.

A deeper question is whether McBrien really escapes the grip of Ptolemy and Newton. It seems that he states many things as guaranteed facts which should be stated as obligations. While granting the fulfillment that is yet to come, he says the Church by its very nature "is" the sacrament and body of Christ, the sign of our unity, "the social and historical embodiment of God's plan for mankind," the bearer of divine authority. Could it, through sinfulness, cease to be any and all of these? Is Christian hope expressible in terms of willy-nilly guarantees? Could the veil of this Temple, like that of chosen Israel, be torn by infidelity "right down the middle"? (Luke 22:45) Is that, perhaps, what is happening? At least we should not presume the contrary and call our presumptions faith. Such "faith" could paralyze and spell death for ecclesial hopes and possibilities.

McBrien inflicts a brisk dismissal on the doctrine of the Assumption because of its unacceptable philosophical underpinnings. The problem here is that there is no such thing as a statement that is free of philosophical bias. The discovery of bias does not mean that

IN BRIEF

Environmental Man. By William Kuhns. Harper & Row, $4.95.

William Kuhns is a boy McLuhan who writes about man's interface with toys, cars, films, buildings, television and computers. In *Environmental Man* he serves up a quickie multi-media sandwich while commenting on each layer's theological significance. Basic, banal and overwrought, but not without heart.

Voices of Convergence. By Daniel J. Leary. Bruce, $4.95.

Syntheses make for unwieldy books. They are either just right or not at all. *Honest to God* made it; *Voices of Convergence* misses. CCNY drama professor Leary attempts too much when he juggles Teilhard, Shaw, Cox, McLuhan, hippies, Dewart *et al. Voices* is redundant if you have read the originals and small pickings if you have not. All that rises, sometimes sinks.

Recent reincarnations in paperback: Peter Berger's fine sociology of knowledge critique of the phenomenon of religion—*The Sacred Canopy* (Doubleday, $1.45); and Maritain's anti-aggiornamento comeback—*The Peasant of the Garonne* (Macmillan, $1.95). P.N.

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nothing is being said, but the detection and dispersal of bias can be really revolutionary. With this in mind, and since ecclesiology is a derivative of Christology, it would have been interesting to see what McBrien would have done if he had looked at Nicaea and Chalcedon to see what their philosophical impediments have done to our faith. Questions will arise on this point in our dialogue with non-Christians

But McBrien could not do everything in his exciting and perceptive work. It is enough that he produced a book that not only should be read but one that is also readable. He boldly breaks with the pious and traditional belief that good theology is incompatible with lucid and literate prose.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 221)

to deny the absolutist claims of personalism, but so did Christ when he said: "Anyone who loses his life for my sake, that man will save it."

(REV.) MELVIN L. FARRELL, S.S.

Riding Out Storms

Detroit

To the Editors: From my vantage point as a social studies teacher and Department Head in a large metropolitan senior high school, I am in a good position to heap volumes of praise on Maurice R. Berube's "Black Power and the Learning Process" [April 11].

All of my experience and cautious reflection substantiates Berube's analysis. I would venture one note of restraint however. I believe we are making slow but deliberate progress. My suggestion: we can ride out the storm. With the kind of knowledge and understanding we have, it is my considered judgment that we shall somehow muddle through and eventually outgrow the problem. I am persuaded that the greatest wisdom resides with Hamlet's suggestion: "To rather bear these ills we have than fly to others that we know not of."

JOSEPH A. KLEEFUSS

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